World War One British promises

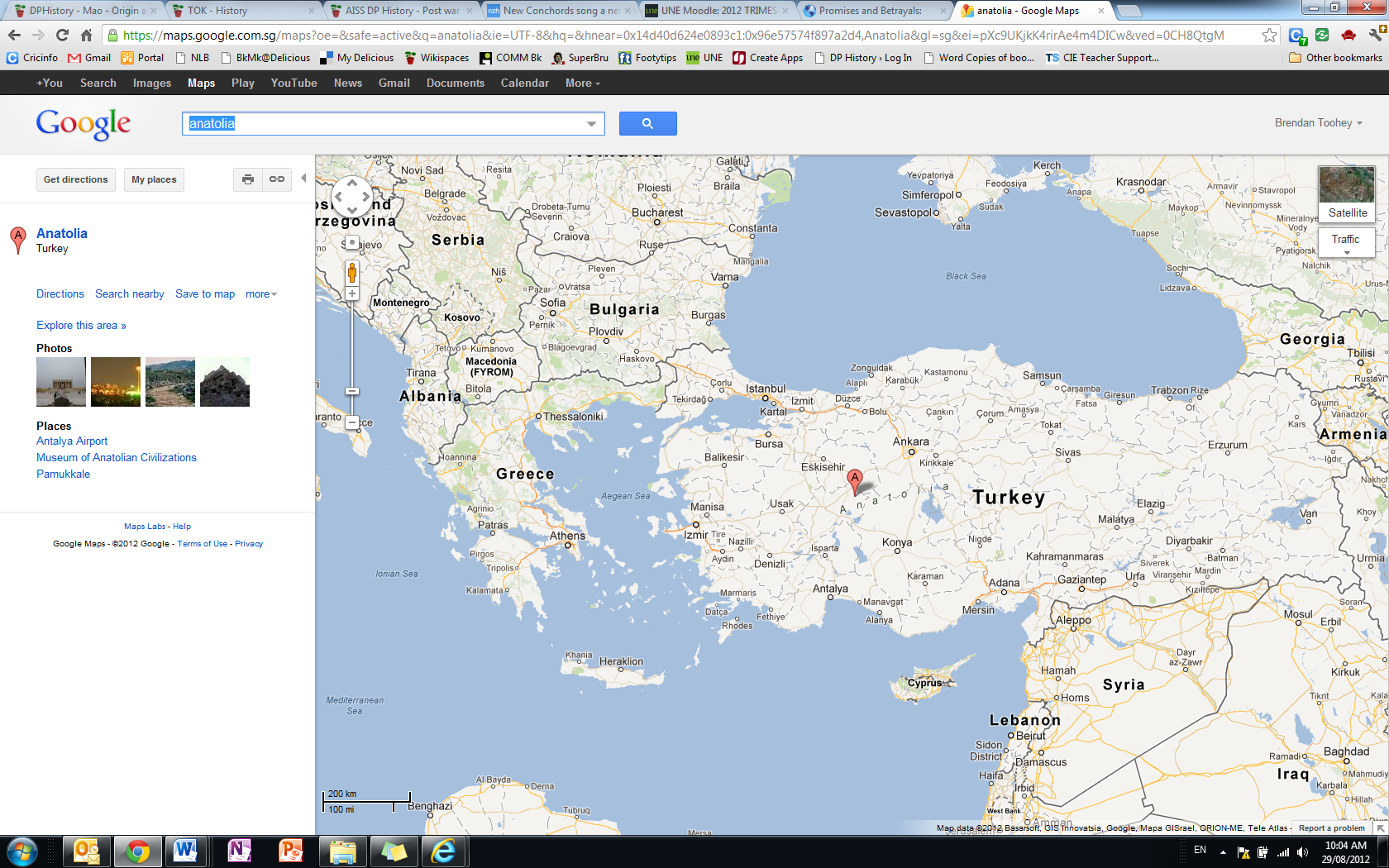
“Promises & Betrayals: Britain and the struggle for the Holy Land”

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article8739.htm>

Three key strategic reasons of ME importance in WWI:

1. Dardanelles Straits as warm weather port for Russia and access to Mediterranean
2. Brought enemy (Triple Alliance/Germany) much closer to Britain’s key holdings (Persia & India)
3. Spread the front, taking more resources away from Western Front in Europe

Assuming victory, Britain promised the break-up of the Ottoman Empire to a number of parties, including promising the same area more than once….



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| **with…** | **Name** | **Result** |
| Russia | Treaty of Constantinople | Russia gets access to the Dardanelles, Russians recognize British and French control of the rest of (ex-) Ottoman Empire |
| French | Sykes-Picot Agreement | Direct control (the good bits!): Fr/GB administer ‘as they saw fit’.  Indirect control: support the new Arab state |
| Italians | Treaty of London | Encouraged Italians to join the war on Allied side; promised Italy Libya, Dodecanese islands, Anatolia. After they learnt of Sykes-Picot, negotiated Sant-Jean Maurienne Agreement (added Smyrna (now Izmir)) |
| Jews | Balfour Declaration | Even though Sykes-Picot agreed to make Palestine an international territory, the British Govt also saw the benefits of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. |
| Arabs | Hussein-McMahon letters | Britain would support Arab independence in exchange for support (Arab uprising against the Ottoman Empire) in the war. June 1918, GB recognises ‘the complete and sovereign independence of the Arabs’. |
| Ottomans | Treaty of Sevres (1920) | Break up of Ottoman Empire with some of the promises fulfilled. |
| Ottomans | Treaty of Lausanne (1923) | Takes back much of the land taken by Sevres and establishes Republic of Turkey |